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# SCIENCE:

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### THE CHANGE AT CORNELL.

THE resignation of Dr. Charles Kendall Adams, president of Cornell University, dated May 5, the acceptance of that resignation by the Trustees at a special meeting called for that purpose May 18, and the immediate election of Dr. J. G. Schurman, Dean of the Sage School of Philosophy at Cornell, to fill the vacancy thus arising at the end of the current college year, are events of supreme importance to that institution, and, we are inclined to think, to the cause of education, and especially of scientific and technical education, generally. President Adams states, as the reason for his withdrawal, that differences of opinion in matters of essential importance in the management of the institution divide the authorities, and finding himself out of harmony with the majority of the managing body—the local Executive Committee, presumably—he feels it his duty to turn the office over to the Trustees.

What are the details of these differences is not stated by him, nor are they publicly known, and conjecture in so important a matter is only harmful; it is sufficient that they must be radical, to bring about such a change. Meantime Dr. Adams has been at the head of that great University seven years, and has seen the most extraordinary development in the course of its always remarkable and striking history. It is to be sincerely hoped that the new administration will be equally fortunate with that just closing. The student-body has increased in these last seven years to between two and three times the number present the year before the accession of President Adams. New departments have been created, new schools formed, and the whole system of organization greatly changed, usually in the direction of advancement. The Trustees, in accepting the resignation, assert that the retiring officer has exhibited wisdom, knowledge, and admirable discretion in his choice of professors, as well as in his general management of affairs, and tender him a year's salary as a testimonial—a very practical one—

of their indebtedness to him, and also request that he sit for his portrait as an addition to the gallery representing the already long list of benefactors of the University. He has certainly a most satisfactory period to review in his final report.

From correspondence in our columns, during the first year of President Adams's administration, and from other sources, we might have had reason to anticipate anything but satisfactory encouragement of Cornell's leading objects. Cornell, it will be remembered, is a "land-grant college" for technical education and scientific work. But the results do not at all encourage that idea. The scientific departments have continued strong, and have grown fully as rapidly as the classical and the literary; in fact, in some directions their growth has been even more extraordinary than that of the latter. The courses in arts and in civil engineering have substantially the same number of students; in architecture the growth has been continuous and rapid; and Sibley College, the departments of which are mainly devoted to instruction in the main lines prescribed by the foundation and by the founders of the University as a school of mechanical engineering and the mechanic arts, has gained, according to the figures of its monthly journal, one thousand per cent. In physics, and especially in the physics of engineering and of electric light and power distribution, and in chemistry, especially in chemistry applied in agriculture, the work performed in research as well as in instruction has attracted general attention, and has done much to place the University among the leading institutions of its class. Its leading objects have been promoted as remarkably as those presumably much nearer the heart of the outgoing president. There is, however, considerable discrimination against the technical courses at Cornell; the charges for tuition being about fifty per cent higher than in the general courses, and their progress has been the more remarkable for this fact. Whatever the reason for his surrender of his charge, there is no question that President Adams has the privilege of looking back upon a most enviable period of great opportunity well-availed of.

Dr. Schurman, the new president, is a very young man to carry such responsibilities—but 38 years of age; but he is reported to have the strength, the energy, and the good-temper of healthful youth, to be capable and even a genius in administration; to be in full sympathy with the work which his acceptance of the position pledges him to carry out in accordance with the terms of the Law of Congress, the Charter of the University, and the explicitly stated wishes of its greatest benefactors; and to be liberal enough to give satisfaction to the officers charged with the conduct of the principal departments of the University. He has the confidence of the Trustees, as was evident from their unanimous agreement in his selection; and it may probably be safely anticipated that Cornell will, under his administration, continue to grow with a rapidity only limited by the magnitude and permanence of her income. Like all great institutions of her class, she always has larger demands than her purse can meet, and her opportunities grow faster than her income. New York State is an exception to the rule in this matter. Nearly all the States, especially those west of New England, make permanent and liberal provision for their land-grant colleges; but New York has never, we understand, done anything for her now flourishing but yet needy State University. One of the opportunities of the Schurman administration may perhaps be the establishment of closer relations with the State, for which his charge is doing so much, and from which it is receiving so little.